

Garnet Valley, PA— Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) and U.S. Senator Bob Casey (PA) joined members of the Bethel Township Hose Company No. 1 to announce a \$75,050 grant that has been awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Both officials wrote letters of support on behalf of Bethel's department to give them the resources to most effectively respond to emergencies. —

"I congratulate the Bethel Township Hose Company on receiving this valuable grant and express my gratitude to the men and women who selflessly sacrifice their time, volunteering to serve our community," said Congressman Sestak. "It is vital to continue to fund these grant programs and advocate for legislation that supports first responders, such as the SERVE Act that I cosponsored to provide a \$1,000 tax credit to volunteer fire fighters and EMS crew members."

"Our fire departments are called on day after day to protect Pennsylvanians, the least we can do is to make sure they are well equipped," said Senator Casey. "This money will provide great assistance to the Bethel Township Hose Company No. 1 for new equipment."

To honor our nation's first responders, including the hundreds of thousands of men and women who serve as volunteer firefighters, Congressman Sestak cosponsored the Supporting Emergency Responders Volunteers Efforts (SERVE) Act as another important way to ensure that volunteer firefighters, who represent approximately 75 percent of the nation's firefighters and make up all of the Bethel Department, are able to serve their community to the best of their ability. Providing a \$1000 tax credit can serve as an important recruitment tool for local groups and can help offset the cost of the many calls and training sessions that volunteers attend on their own time and at their own expense.

To be eligible for the Assistance to Firefighter Grant Award program, a department must provide some portion of the funding in addition to the federal funds. The cost sharing is based on department size, with larger fire departments bearing a larger share of the program costs. Fire departments serving 50,000 residents or fewer are responsible for 10 percent of the total program costs while departments serving more than 50,000 residents share 30 percent of the total program costs. This is the second round of fire grants for Fiscal Year 2008.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

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